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New island pet shop focuses on holistic care

By Eileen M. Daly

Following the death of their pet German shepherd-lab mix, Mako, Tori Hellewell and her fiancé, Pio Moretti, brought home two German shepherd puppies, Isla and Cuda. They raised the puppies with love and attention, making sure to give them the best foods and health products.

Despite their diligent care, however, Isla developed cancer. Mako's death and Isla's cancer diagnosis led Hellewell and Moretti to "really look into holistic health care," for their pets, Moretti said.

Their search unearthed a

wealth of information about exactly what goes into the products that many people believe are healthy and good for their pets, Hellewell said.

"A lot of people use the Science Diet, but the first products listed are brewers rice, a byproduct of the alcohol industry, which a lot of animals are allergic to, chicken meal that isn't meat, but byproducts - including ground feet, whole grain wheat that many animals are allergic to, soybean meal and corn gluten, which is not good for dogs," Hellewell said.

Hellewell and Moretti's search

for quality pet care products ultimately led them to a little store in Contoocook, N.H. called Rusty's General Store for Animals. There, they met owner Lynda Kimball, who became the couple's mentor, Hellewell said.

"When Pio walked out to the truck, he said he was thinking, 'It's a good thing we don't have one of these stores in Jamestown because Tori would be there all the time.' Then he thought, 'Wait a minute, we need one of these stores in Jamestown,'" Hellewell said.

With that, the idea of Island Animal was born, she said.

The store, located at 24 Southwest Ave., carries a full line of healthy holistic pet products.

"When animals are given really healthy products, they are not only healthier, but happier and better behaved," Moretti said. As for the extra costs of such products, Moretti said, the reduced veterinarian bills more than make up for the costs.

Island Animal carries "really healthy food, made in America with real meat," Hellewell said. "We even pay attention to when companies are sold because they are allowed to change the ingredients in products without changing the label for one whole year after the sale," she said.

Island Animal also carries supplements, quality toys (many of which have been tested by their own German shepherds for strength), some sweaters and coats, nautical-themed collars, heavy-duty collars and leashes with lifetime guarantees, and beds, Hellewell said.

In addition to those products, the store offers training supplies, including books, videos, harnesses, clicker training and a "really wonderful electronic collar," Hellewell said. "The collar can be set at vibrate mode instead of shock. The shock mode has an LCD screen and goes up to 130. We have only had to use a level of 37 with our German shepherds," she said.

They have even tested the shock level on themselves, Hellewell said.

"Even my mother tested it at a level of 45," she said.

By having a range up to 130, Hellewell said, the collar offers a more controlled method of training.

"Most collars go up to 10 and that is equivalent to the 130," she said.

Island Animal, referred to by the owners as a store for pets and their people, also offers some "people products," Hellewell said.

"We have some ornaments, frames and cards," she said. Other "people" gifts include: T-shirts, mugs, jewelry and books, including both storybooks and training books, she said.

The store's grand opening was held last Saturday, Dec. 5, and Hellewell said they are still in the process of adding inventory in response to customer needs.

"We've just opened, so we will be adding products as we go along," she said.

Hellewell and Moretti invite

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1.00CT	Round	S12-F	\$9999	\$6999
1.00CT	Round	S11-D	\$8999	\$6299
1.00CT	Round	VS1-D Ideal	\$10,000	\$6995
1.12CT	Round	S12-D Ideal	\$12,899	\$8995
1.14CT	Round	S11-G	\$9999	\$6950
1.50CT	Round	VS2-K	\$13,900	\$9500
3.12CT	Round	S12-J Ideal	\$38,499	\$24,999
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.77CT	Princess	VVS2-I	\$5995	\$4195
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1.01CT	Cushion	S12-I	\$7295	\$4995
1.02CT	Emerald	VVS2-I	\$7995	\$5495
1.13CT	Princess	S11-I	\$6995	\$4895
1.53CT	Radiant	IF-H	\$18,500	\$13,500
2.00CT	Princess	S11-H	\$29,999	\$21,000
2.24CT	Asher	VVS1-H	\$25,499	\$17,500
2.67CT	Radiant	Fancy Lt. Yellow	\$29,950	\$22,500
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.93CT TWT	\$2299	\$1600
1.08CT TWT	\$3150	\$2200
1.26CT TWT	\$4600	\$3200
1.44CT TWT	Heart \$6995	\$4900
1.70CT TWT	\$8300	\$5800
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